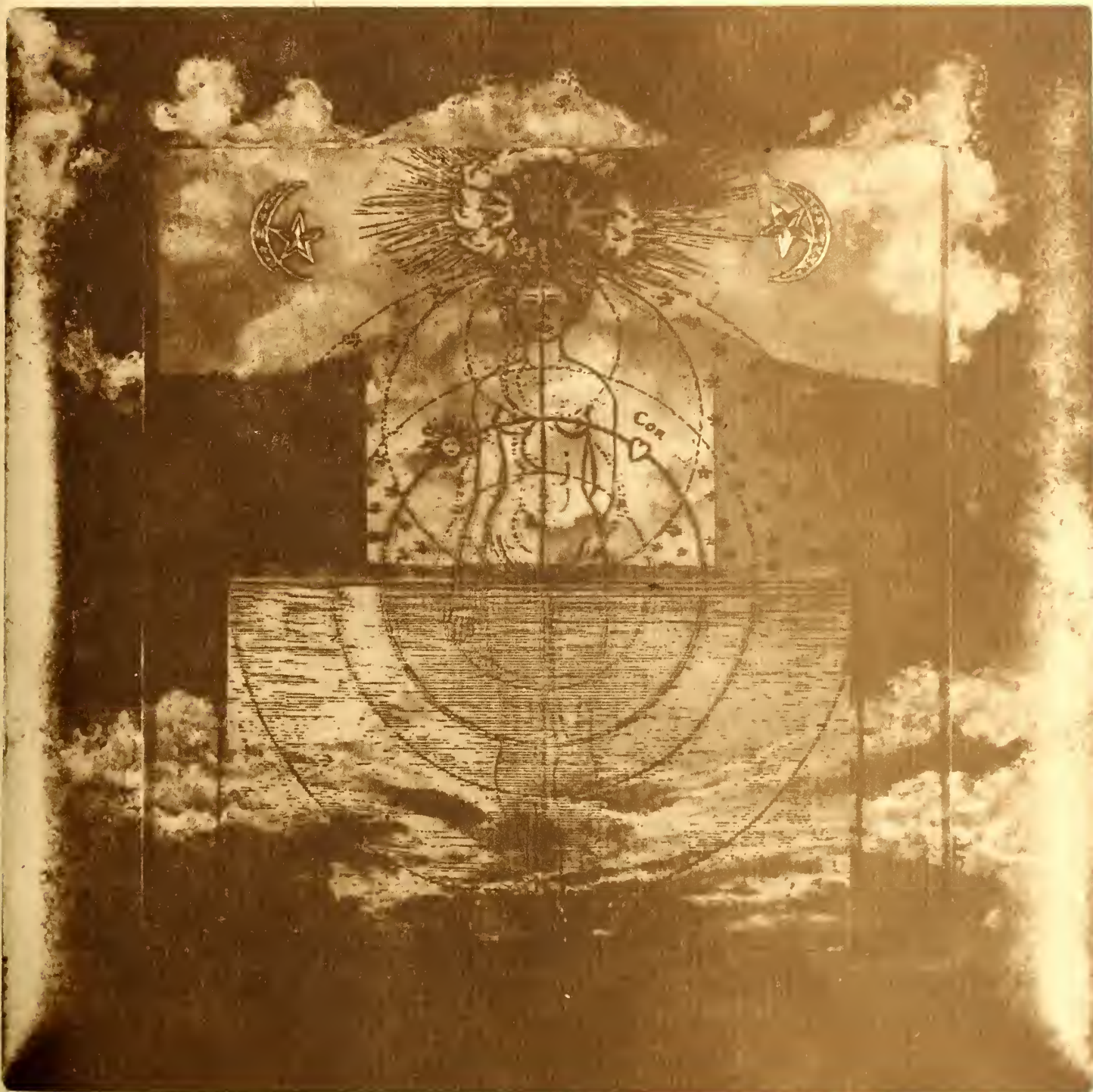




# The Creative Woman

Quarterly



## IMAGES

Women In Art

# Summer

1978

## BIOGRAPHICAL HIGHLIGHTS

### Betye Saar

**Born:** Los Angeles, California, 1926. **Education:** University of California, Los Angeles, B.A., 1949. Graduate Studies: Long Beach State College, California, 1958-1962; University of Southern California, Los Angeles, 1962; California State University, Northridge, 1966; American Film Institute, Los Angeles, 1972.

**Selected One-Woman Exhibitions:** Multi-Cul Gallery, Los Angeles, 1972; Berkeley Art Center, California, 1972; University of California, Santa Cruz, 1973; California State University, Los Angeles, 1973 (catalog published); Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1975 (catalog published); Douglass College, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1976 (catalog published); *Women Artists Series Year Five*, 1975; Monique Knowlton Gallery, Inc., New York, 1976.

**Selected Group Exhibitions:** *20 California Women Artists*, Lytton Center of the Visual Arts, Los Angeles, 1968; *Contemporary Black Artists*, Ruder & Finn Fine Arts, New York (catalog published; exhibition circulated nationally 1968-70); *Dimensions of Black*, La Jolla Museum of Art, California, 1970 (catalog published); *1970 Annual Exhibition, Contemporary American Sculpture*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (catalog published); *Contemporary Black Artists in America*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1971 (catalog published); *5: Benny, Bernie, Betye, Noah and John*, Lang Art Gallery, Scripps College, Claremont, California, 1971 (catalog published); *Black Untitled III/Dimensions of the Figure*, The Oakland Museum, California, 1971 (catalog published); *Los Angeles 1972: A Panorama of Black Artists*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1972 (catalog published); *Small Environments*, University Galleries, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, 1972 (slide catalog); *Dimensional Prints*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1973 (catalog published); *Black Mirror*, Womanspace, Los Angeles, 1973; *Art by Women in the Museum Collection*, University Art Museum, University of California,

Berkeley, 1973; *Blacks: USA: 1973*, New York Cultural Center, New York, 1973 (catalog published); *West Coast '74: The Black Image*, E.B. Crocker Art Gallery, Sacramento, California, 1974 (catalog published; also shown at Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery); *Three Women Artists*, Palos Verdes Art Museum, California, 1974; *Sixteen Los Angeles Women Artists*, Cerritos College, California, 1974 (catalog published); *Collage and Assemblage*, Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, 1975 (catalog published in *Journal [LAICA]*, No. 6, June-July 1975); *Female Imagery in Art*, Clark Humanities Museum, Scripps College, Claremont, California, 1975; *An Exhibition in Tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*, Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery, 1976 (catalog published); *Four Los Angeles Area Artists*, Fisher Gallery, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, 1976 (catalog published); *Twentieth Century Black American Artists*, San Jose Museum of Art, California (catalog published); *Painting and Sculpture in California: The Modern Era*, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 1976 (catalog published; also shown at National Collection of Fine Arts, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.).

Cover:

QUASAR'S QUEST, 1976, mixed media assemblage/collage, Betye Saar.



A quarterly, Governors State University, Park Forest South, IL 60466.

VOL. 2, NO. 1, SUMMER 1978

A quarterly published at Governors State University under the auspices of the Provost's Office ©1978, Governors State University and Helen Hughes

#### STAFF

Helen E. Hughes, *Editor*  
Marian Schuller, *Editorial Assistant*  
Joan Lewis, *Editorial Consultant*  
Suzanne Oliver, *Graphic Designer*

#### ADVISORY COUNCIL

Marilyn Blitzstein, *Subscriptions*  
Rev. Ellen Dohner, *Religion and Philosophy of Creativity*  
Dorothy Freck, *Science/Journalism*  
Harriet Gross, *Sociology/Women's Studies*  
Helene Guttman, *Biological Sciences*  
Shirley Katz, *Music/Literature*  
Donna Piontek, *Social Sciences*  
Betye Saar, *Fine Arts*  
Sara Shumer, *Political Theory*  
Emily Wasiolek, *Literature*

#### GUEST EDITOR

Betye Saar

this issue is about

#### IMAGES

& some women artists who make  
images.

Everything  
makes an imprint.  
The artist  
recycles imprints.  
We reflect  
accept  
express.

My selective eye  
is attracted to  
images  
which express duality  
child-woman  
male-female  
a pushing outward-emergence  
a pulling inward-centered  
an inclusion of history  
of future  
of now.  
a connection to nature.  
of clarity & secrets.

For the artist  
our images  
are the fruit of our  
creative being.

Betye Saar  
Guest Editor  
Summer 1978



NIGHT RIDERS, 1973, acrylic wash.

It is our woods.  
Whenever we once walked  
Outside of our own realm  
It is our woods.  
Upon one of those narrow  
Trees the marks grew and  
It is our woods.

Suzanne Jackson

BUCKETS AND STRAW, Julie Taylor, Richton  
Park, IL., 1977.

In the manner of many of my photographs,  
the subject matter in this particular  
image represents a fading way of life.  
Simple tools are left to rust while being  
replaced by the megamachinery of the  
agri-industry.

Visually I was attracted by the texture  
of the straw and by the soft lighting on  
the forms of the buckets that played  
against the shadowy area surrounding  
them.





## DOING ART

Doing art

Is not the same as making art.

There is confusion about this

Even though we all know

There is doing art and making art

Which is the difference between

Homemade and storebought.

Jodi Gordon

1977

"Images of people and people-relationships have always dominated my work. Also it is my personal need to draw, paint and create prints which are expressive of my own inner emotional life through the use of human forms.

My response to nature was magnified during a recent journey to the Grand Canyon.

Rock formations brought to mind a grouping of people bound together in common history and ritual. However in exploring this image further, it became charged with the impact of an ageless unity and struggle between male and female....it became the painting THE GRAND CANYON."

Betty La Duke



THE GRAND CANYON, 1976, acrylic painting.

## BOOK REVIEW

WOMEN AND CREATIVITY by Joelynn Snyder-Ott, Les Femmes Publishing, 1978.

Joelynn Snyder-Ott refers to herself as a "researcher of women's art" and in WOMEN AND CREATIVITY she lives up to that claim, for the book provides us with much factual information about women as artists, not only in the present but in the past as well.

The first chapter documents the situation that has characterized the art world in our century. A sad state of affairs, indeed, but as Snyder-Ott says, "We can change this situation!" The first step is knowledge. Self-knowledge on the part of women whereby they will be able to "confront themselves emotionally as women." The author lists many of the outstanding women painters in western art as far back as the 16th century. The list will undoubtedly grow as more research into the past is undertaken. As Snyder-Ott says, "We have a great amount of excavation ahead of us. Women's historical contributions are buried throughout the libraries of the world. The time has come to blow away the dust and cobwebs from them, as well as from our minds."

So ends the first chapter. The next 11 chapters are devoted to this task, beginning with the ancient site of Stonehenge, England. "Female Iconography at Stonehenge" tells of a trip the author and her daughter made to this mysterious monument of prehistory, and of the emotional impact it had on them. This chapter includes four drawings by the author.

Three more chapters are the result of Snyder-Ott's year of residence in England. "A View from England" is an interesting analysis of the difference between the feminist movement there and in the United States. "The Feminist struggle in England seems to be much more of a class struggle than a problem which is unique to women." The author found England to be "more quietly sensitive and non-aggressive" than the U.S. and she found the year a memorable one. Two English women impressed

her deeply and she has devoted a chapter to each.

Angelina Kauffman though Swiss by birth, lived and worked for most of her life in 18th century England, gaining great respect as a portraitist and designer. Very different indeed is Englishwoman Trude Collinson Baxter, who devoted the past 30 years of her life to a collection which deals with all facets of birth and birth iconography.

We sometimes think that the feminist art movement is a phenomenon of the '70s, but in reality it is not so new, for in 1892 women artists from around the world came together to seek representation at the World's Columbian Exposition at Chicago. In her chapter "A Woman's Place," Snyder-Ott recounts the story of that threshold of equality.

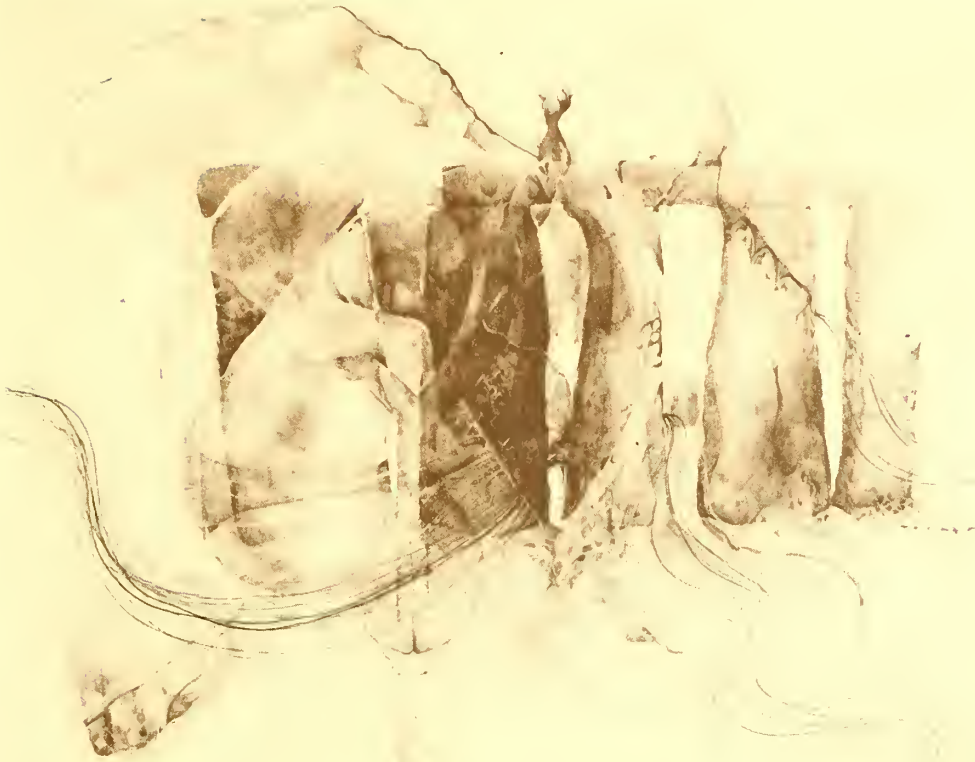
Running down the remaining chapter titles will suggest the variety of subject matter in WOMEN AND CREATIVITY. "An Art School for Women" interviews women students and faculty of a small woman's art college. "Feminist Art Programs" discusses the politics of working with a male establishment. "Creativity and Procreativity" is a description of a show the author had that used dancers to interpret her drawings of birth and rebirth. "Art as Yin in a Yang Society" expounds on the ancient Tao - the ideal of the perfect balance between the masculine and the feminine qualities. This chapter gave me some difficulty for I find such statements as, "...the sun and moon are considered polar forces, one being neither more important than the other but complementary..." carry the feminist advocacy of the author too far. However, there was much food for thought in it, none the less.

Joelynn Snyder-Ott has done a real service to her sister artists (and I include myself in this group) by bringing to light the many women artists who have been obscured by time and male historians. I find it amazing that in 30 years of fairly close attention to the world of art, I had not heard of over half of these women. Needless to say, I find this very exciting and gratifying.

*Mary Malone*

"The dolmens with their ragged inner edges, all at various degrees of opening, not unsimilar to vaginas, were the very organic forms I had used in my own work as an artist."

Joelynn Snyder-Ott



FEMALE ICONOGRAPHY, Stonehenge series #4.  
Graphite drawing by Joelynn Snyder-Ott  
from WOMEN AND CREATIVITY, copyright 1978.  
Reprinted with permission of Les Femmes,  
231 Adrian Road, Millbrae, CA 94030,  
publisher.



FRIEDA'S JACKET, 1974, mixed media assemblage.

## FRIEDA'S JACKET

"Clothing is vastly important to me. Intuitively, I have very strong emotions about certain articles of clothing. I bought a dark green antique jacket at a Goodwill vintage sale. A few days later a friend gave me an old photograph of a young woman who was wearing a jacket that was very similar to the jacket I had bought. At a junk store I found a letter written in German. The only word I could understand was the word Frieda

which was repeated a few times. It came to me that the woman in the photo looked like her name was a Frieda and all of these elements that had become scattered had now come back together and I had to assemble them to create an art-work that would be like a shrine to Frieda.

I believe that something of the person is retained in the object, I can feel their power radiating from the finished pieces. They are not forgotten, now."

Nancy Youdelman



FRIEDA'S JACKET, 1974, detail.

## MINNIE EVANS: PAINTER OF DREAMS

by Alison Saar

Minnie Evans was born in Long Creek, North Carolina in 1883. While still a child she and her family moved to Wilmington, North Carolina where she has lived since. Later she resided in The Arlie Gardens as a gatekeeper. These gardens made an imprint which is apparent in her art. Evans began drawing and painting in 1935 when she was fifty-two years old. Since that time she has achieved recognition as a notable self-taught Black artist. Her works have been shown in a number of museums and galleries including one person exhibits at the Art and Image Gallery in New York, The Modern Museum of Art, New York and The Whitney Museum of American Art in New York.

Minnie Evans' paintings flourish with intense colors and intricate patterns. Her canvases have varied from cardboard to scraps of paper to canvasboard. Sometimes she has collaged scraps of paper over the canvas creating various textures within one piece. Using watercolor or oil paint and pen and ink or pencil for detail lines, Evans created mysterious fantasies. Her mystical works contain spirits hiding among flowers and leaves. Unknown symbols come forth and recede in complex patterns. Mysterious eyes appear from nowhere giving the viewer the feeling that they are being inspected by the painting. Minnie Evans' use of bright colors and symmetrical symbols are reminiscent of the paintings of Haiti and some contemporary African paintings, all sharing a vitality and a power--beyond cognition. Evans' sense of pattern and symmetry is much like the configurations characteristic of Haitian vevs, containing spirals, diamonds, serpents, horns and stars. Hearts and crosses are often included.

Although not a religious fanatic, for Evans makes no mention of God in terms of her visions and art, her works have a strong religious quality. The images in Evans' painting come to her in dreams and although she herself is unsure of

the meaning of the images she senses their power and importance therefore, she paints.

*Alison Saar, a recent graduate from Scripps College in Pomona, California, majored in studio art and non-western art history.*

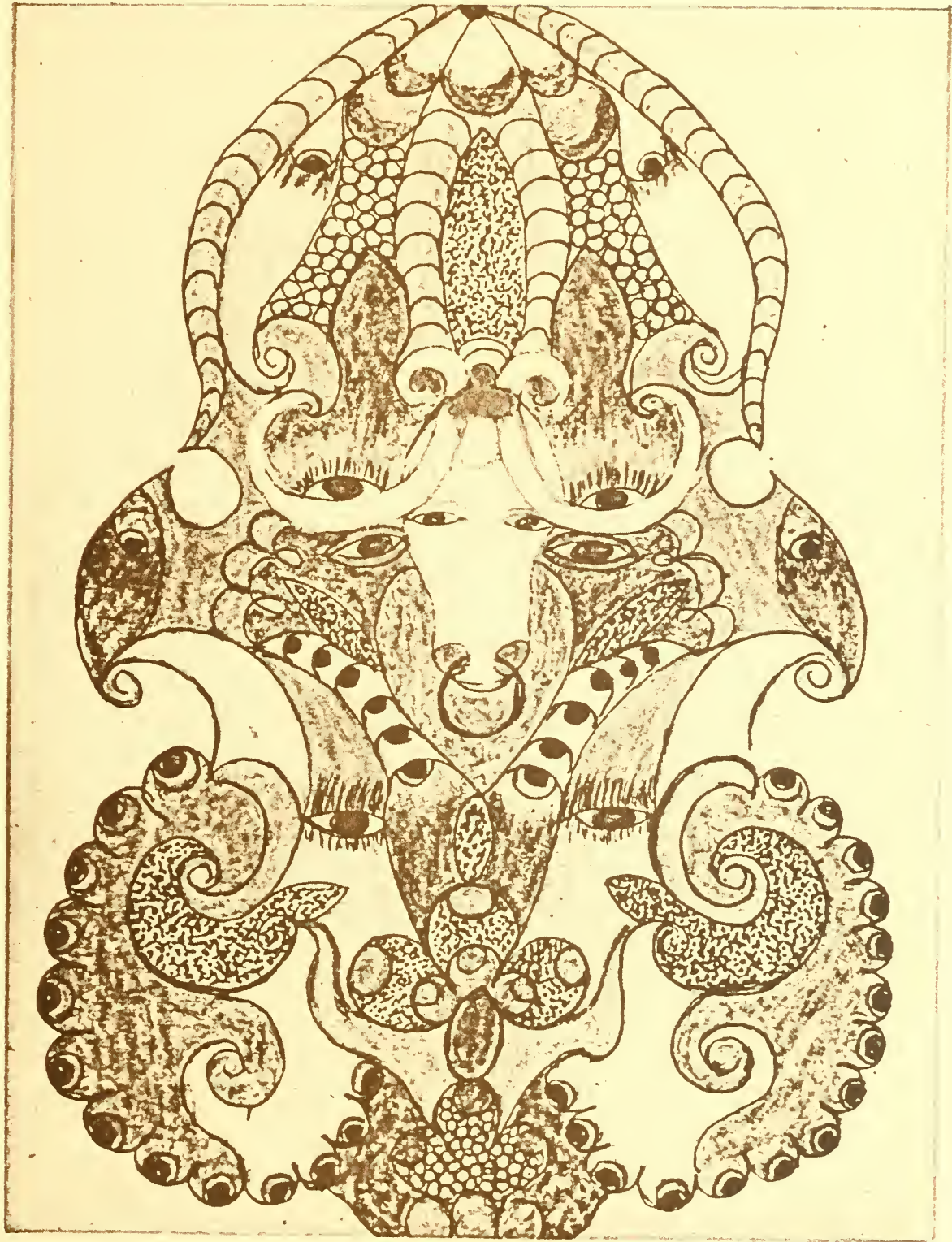
## NOTE

In Praise of Women Artists '76 ( a calendar) NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund. Bo-Tree Productions, 2 Casa Way, San Francisco, CA 94123.

"No one has taught me about drawing. No one could because no one knows what to teach me. No one has taught me to paint. It came to me....In a dream it was shown to me what I have to do, of painting. I never plan a drawing. They just happen."

Minnie Evans

' courtesy of Nina Howell Starr



UNTITLED, Minnie Evans.

FOR ASTRID

No lands.

Filament of the mind.

Plain and modest pencils  
Wheeling little carts  
Dragging hoes back and forth  
Up and down  
Right and left  
Here and there.  
Did I see that?

Meticulous space threaded with lead  
Virgin paper penetrated with strokes  
Pastel murmurs strummed  
Slow rows of lines  
Planted with crops of unnamed feelings.

Artist as farmer.  
Agriart.  
Irrigated lines and space.  
Shiny young lines  
Shooting tender varigated runners  
Tendrils spawning  
Lines weaning from space.

Paper icefloe through line isthmus;  
Geography of an art  
Indelible intention  
Control and integrity  
Performance from a mental model.

Lines treading space for a trillionth time  
Watertight as Dasolalee baskets.

You as Cleo  
Ultimate artist  
Woman  
Artist  
Artist  
Woman

Intimate connection  
For the art act.

I am writing you from ho hum Chinese restaurant.  
Even the mustard is wrong.  
But involved as I am  
Here is the fortune:

YOU NEED TO LEARN TO READ  
BETWEEN THE LINES.

There is always someone and something  
Waiting in the wings.

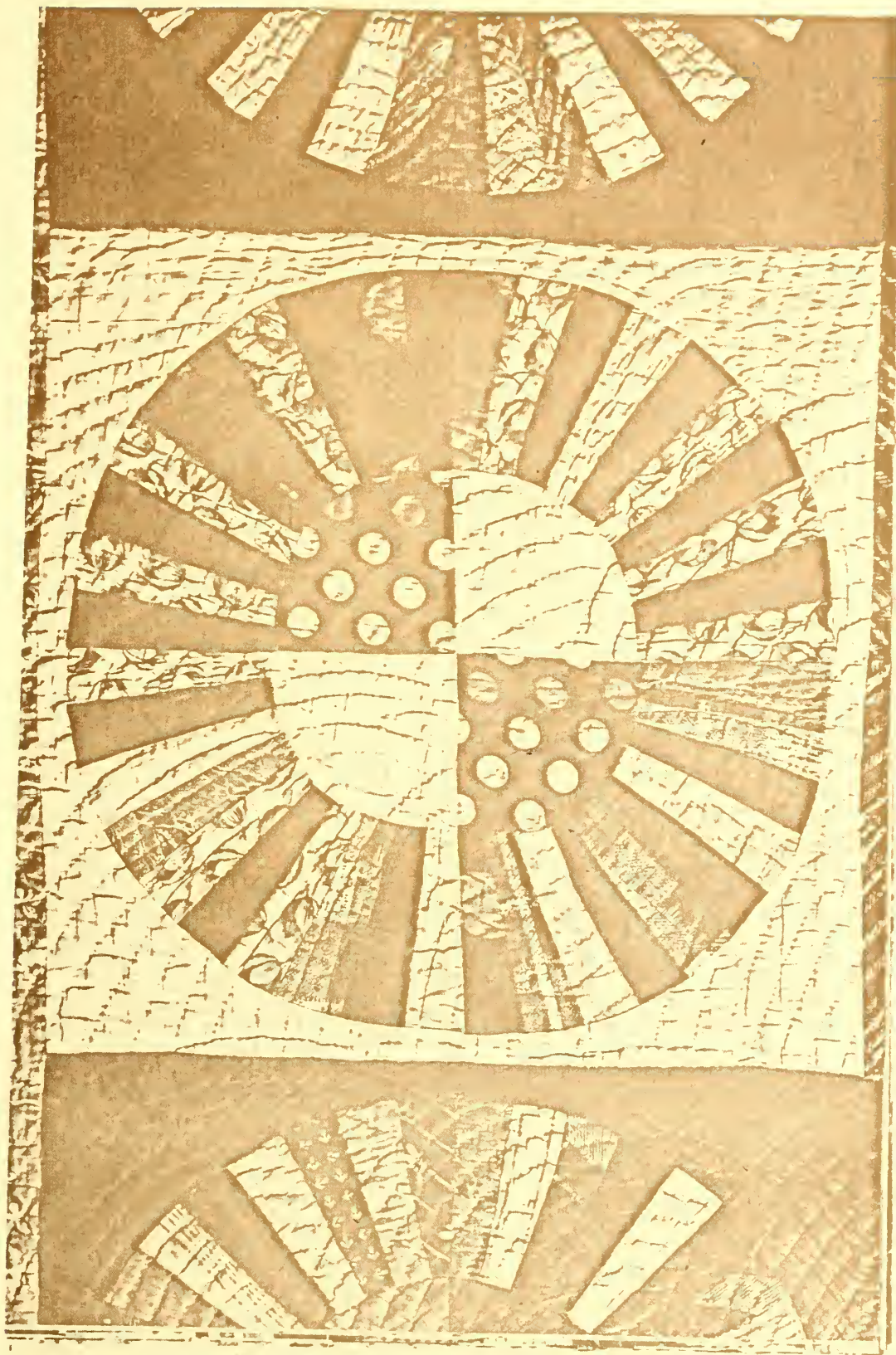
It is not easy to know  
My eyes have never before seen  
Your simple configuration.  
375 lute strings  
Cracking against paperskin.

Graceful as a child's prayer  
Drawings are blessings I think.

Goosedown drawings  
Simple unbusy  
Meaning everything and nothing.

I confess I use art  
Like a house of mirrors  
To confuse death.

Joni Gordon  
1977



QUILT DETAIL

"Wagon Wheels" variation.. Rebecca  
Hawley Morton, Warren County, Ohio,  
1841.

## Book Review

**BY OUR OWN HANDS: The Women Artists' Movement, Southern California, 1970-1976.** Faith Wilding.

by Ruth Askey

□ It is impossible to read Faith Wilding's *By Our Own Hands* and not compare where you were and what you were doing during the last seven years in California while the Feminist Art Movement was making its impact through all our consciousnesses—raised or otherwise.

The book is good. It is succinct, well organized, and gives a clear historical overview of the pivotal events in the California movement. Any one of the chapters could make an in-depth study: Future historians, take note.

Successive chapters are devoted to:

- Judy Chicago's founding of the first feminist art education program at California State University, Fresno, in 1970.
  - June Wayne's "Joan of Art" lectures, a seminar on "Business and Professional Problems of Women Artists."
  - "Womanhouse," a collaborative 1972 work of the Feminist Art Program, California Institute of Arts.
  - Two landmark shows: "25 California Women of Art," which, curated by Josine Inaco-Starrels in 1968, identified early some of the strongest West Coast women artists—Joan Brown, Vija Celmins, Max Cole, and Betye Saar, to name a few. "21 Artists: Invisible/Visible," curated by Dextra Frankel in 1972, identified work by women demonstrating female sensibilities. Frankel, Chicago, and Miriam Schapiro had traveled through California visiting women and choosing works, including those of Martha Alf, Eleanor Antin, Sherry Brody, Karen Carson, Judy Chicago, Rita Yokoi, and Connie Zehr.
  - The inception, development, and demise of Womanspace and the Grandview Woman's Building, intended to "provide women artists with an alternative to the existing art world . . . where they could control all aspects of the art-making process from exhibition to criticism."
  - The present Woman's Building on Spring Street has its own chapter, as does the Feminist Studio Workshop, its central institution. The founders of FSW—Chicago, Arlene Raven, and Sheila deBretteville—describe it as a place to "explore alternative ways of introducing . . . female perspective into society."
- The book touches on one such alternative course—Chicago's current Brodingtonian project, "The Dinner Party." The collaborative work (50 women) will reinterpret history from a feminist perspective.

*By Our Own Hands* contains over 100 photographs. Nancy Youdelman, photo editor, amassed group shots that read like a *Who's Who* of local artists. Other photos document everyday events, individual artwork, performances, and exhibitions.

It's a book for artists, historians, and just plain photo-lovers. ■



"I am interested in the transformative power of art. For ten years now, I have been researching the myths and images of ancient cultures which worshipped a female goddess.

In my work, the metaphor for all this is the plant. The image reproduced here is called 'The Virgin Goddess' and is from my Bird of Paradise series. I use the ancient image of the horns of consecration, or the goddess with the upraised arms in this form, which is half plant, half sea-creature and bandaged human aspiration. In choosing the hieratic gesture, I was thinking of icons. I do not worship a god or goddess, but to me, all creation, including myself, is infinite and holy.

My aspiration as a woman has always been to invent a new language of images which can describe the new being of women in the world, as well as bringing old truths back into new vision."

Faith Wilding



THE VIRGIN GODDESS, 1977, mixed media on paper.

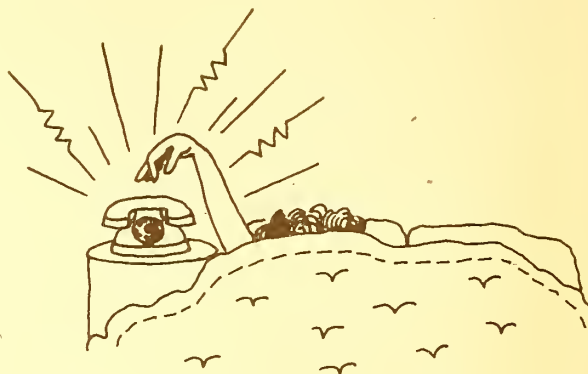
## FROM THE EDITOR'S BED

About this issue's Guest Editor:  
a collage of images of BETYE SAAR,

...a fragrant gumbo stew cooking on the stove in the little house in Hermosa Beach "Come in. Have some with us. There's plenty!"...Betye arriving at our little house in Manhattan Beach "You have a lot of good plants around here. Let's move them in front of the adobe house," and soon there is a rock garden with succulants and cacti...our modern dance group, putting dance to music and to poetry every Friday night...sitting by the fireplace, talking, sipping wine ...Betye with paint samples and fabric swatches, designing the interior of the adobe house...Betye, the mother, sending two little girls into their room to play so that two friends can visit; at the first sign of a fuss, "Time to get in the tub!" two little girls splashing happily in their bath; at the first sign of a fuss "Time to get out! Time to eat!"...gallery openings, exhibits, parties at the house nestled against the Hollywood hills...sitting in the camper at night telling voodoo ghost stories...Betye making costumes for the Renaissance Pleasure Faire, going as a fortune-teller, a gypsy, a belly dancer...a phone call at five a.m. "Hello, this is Betye Saar. At O'Hare. I'm on my way to Nigeria to take part in a Black Artists Conference. I just wanted to hear your voice"...Betye sharing her personal notebook of dream images: "I'll send you a color xerox of that one if you like it"...Betye's art constantly changing and growing: mystery and rage, humor and anger, seizing power from the universe and from deep within herself, using her sensitivity as a tool, to celebrate experience and to defy the coarseness and cruelty of the world.

Thanks, Betye Saar, for the gift of your spirit, your stars and moon, for a friendship that's lasted over twenty years, and for this issue of The Creative Woman.

Helen Hughes



## IN PREPARATION:

Fall 1978: Politics and the Study of Politics, (women in political theory, government, administration, public affairs) deadline - September 21, 1978; Guest Editor: SARA SHUMER, 2405 McGee Avenue, Berkeley, California 94703. Readers are invited to submit articles, book reviews, photographs, cartoons, poetry on the topic to Professor Shumer or to the editorial office at Governors State University.

Please send me The Creative Woman for one year. Enclosed is my check or money order for \$\_\_\_\_\_.

\$ 5.00 regular subscription  
\$ 7.00 foreign subscription  
\$10.00+ donation and automatic subscription

Return to: The Creative Woman  
Governors State University  
Park Forest South, IL 60466

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_



## WOMEN ARTISTS RESOURCES

### BOOKS

ART: A WOMAN'S SENSIBILITY. Miriam Schapiro, Director, Feminist Art Program, California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, 1975.

BY OUR OWN HANDS: THE WOMEN ARTIST'S MOVEMENT. Faith Wilding, Southern California, 1970-1976. Double X, Box 5302, Ocean Park Station, Santa Monica, CA 90405. Softcover, \$8.00 plus shipping.

FEMALE ARTISTS PAST AND PRESENT. Vicky Lynn Hill, Editor. (\$6 individual, \$7 institutions) 1974 & 1975 Supplement. Women's History Research Center, 2325 Oak St., Berkeley, CA 94708.

FROM THE CENTER, FEMINIST ESSAYS ON WOMEN'S ART. Lucy Lippard Dutton, New York, 1976, 314 pp.

WOMEN ARTISTS: FROM EARLY MIDDLE AGES TO THE 20th CENTURY. Karen Petersen and J.J. Wilson. The Women's Press, London, 1978. Women in Distribution Inc., P.O. Box 8858, Washington, D.C. 20003.

WOMEN AND CREATIVITY. Joelynn Snyder-Ott, Random House, New York, 1977.

### FILMS

CLAIRE FALKENSTEIN: SCULPTOR. Jae Carmichael, Producer/Director, 1978. U.S.C. Film Library, U.S.C. University Park, Los Angeles, CA 90007.

DIRECTORY OF FILMS, BY AND ABOUT WOMEN, INTERNATIONALLY, PAST AND PRESENT. Women's History Research Center, 2325 Oak St., Berkeley, CA 94708.

THE ORIGINALS: WOMEN IN ART. Perry Adato Miller, Producer/Director, WNET/13 N.Y. Distributed by Films, Inc., 1144 Wilmette Ave., Wilmette, IL 60091.  
Georgia O'Keefe, 60 min., color, 16 mm & videocassette.  
Louise Nevelson in Process. 28 min., color, 16 mm & videocassette.  
Helen Frankenthaler. 28 min., color, 16 mm & videocassette.  
Mary Cassatt-Impressionist from Philadelphia. 28 min., color, 16 mm & video.  
Spirit Catcher-The Art of Betye Saar. 28 min., color, 16 mm & videocassette.  
Anonymous Was a Woman. 28 min., color, 16 mm & video cassette.

### SLIDES

PRE-20th CENTURY WOMEN ARTISTS

20th CENTURY WOMEN ARTISTS. Rosenthal Art Slides. 5456 S. Ridge Court, Chicago, IL 60615.

WOMEN ARTISTS. Janelle Reiring. Slide lecture. SL9, \$100. Art Information Distribution, P.O. Box 757, Cooper Station, New York 10003.



Governors State University  
Park Forest South, IL 60466

Nonprofit Org.  
U. S. Postage Paid  
Park Forest South, IL  
Permit #178